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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6209  
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 000593

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/31/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [ASEC](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: SIX CONGOLESE KIDNAPPED IN CONTINUING VIOLENCE  
NEAR BUKAVU

REF: KINSHASA 582

Classified By: Poloff KRBel for reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. (SBU) At least six additional Congolese civilians were reported kidnapped from a village in Kabere district, about 19 miles northwest of Bukavu, on May 31. In related violence in the Kanyola area southwest of Bukavu on May 26 (reftel), after another civilian died of his wounds, nineteen civilians are now confirmed dead. Twenty-six remain seriously injured and four are still missing. According to MONUC military officials, there is no confirmation that twelve people allegedly kidnapped by militiamen on May 26 were executed in the forest.

¶2. (C) Press reports continue to claim that the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) are behind the attacks, although it is likelier that an FDLR-aligned group known as the Rastas is responsible (reftel). In a May 31 MONUC report, Walungu town administrator Joseph Kokez reportedly asked MONUC to "stop differentiating" between the two groups, claiming that "these two groups belong to the same criminal organization and FDLR provide(s) support for the Rastas."

¶3. (SBU) After a confrontation between villagers in Kanyola and MONUC in which MONUC civilians in a humanitarian and investigation mission were forced to return to Bukavu (reftel), civilians are beginning to request a stronger Congolese security presence in the region. Kokez reportedly asked the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) officials to increase troops and patrols in the surrounding area in an attempt to stem violent confrontations.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: These violent attacks are likely reprisals for the FARDC's recent offensive against militias in South Kivu. The balancing act for local villagers has long involved attempts to avoid overtly favoring one side in order to escape retaliatory attacks from the other. If the request for increased FARDC troops is representative of popular opinion, this represents a change in the local sentiment. Until very recently, many Congolese villagers have denounced FARDC troops, claiming that their abuses and predations were far worse than those committed by members of the FDLR. End comment.

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